

**BOARD OF GAME AND INLAND FISHERIES MEETING MINUTES
4000 WEST BROAD STREET
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA**

MARCH 24, 2005, 9:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Daniel A. Hoffler, C. Marshall Davison, John W. Montgomery, Jr., Richard E. Railey, Jr. (left at 2:45 p.m.), Sherry S. Crumley, Jack T. Shoosmith (left at 11:30 a.m.), Randy J. Kozuch, Charles S. Yates; **ABSENT:** Will McNeely and Jimmy Hazel (schedule conflict), Cecil T. Campbell (personal illness); **LEGAL COUNSEL:** Roger Chaffe; **DIRECTOR:** William L. Woodfin, Jr.; **SENIOR STAFF:** Raymond E. Davis, Charlie Sledd, Terry Bradbery, David Whitehurst, Gary Martel, Bob Duncan

Chairman Hoffler called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. He welcomed everyone and Terry Bradbery led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

1. Nomination of Board Chair: Chairman Hoffler called for nominations for a Board Chairman. **Mr. Davison moved, seconded by Mr. Shoosmith, passed unanimously, that Sherry S. Crumley be nominated to serve as Board Chairman. (Ayes: Davison, Shoosmith, Hoffler, Montgomery, Railey, Kozuch, Yates).**

After determining that there were no additional nominations for Board Chairman, Mr. Hoffler called for a motion. **Mr. Railey moved, seconded by Mr. Montgomery, passed unanimously, that Sherry S. Crumley be elected Board Chairman. (Ayes: Railey, Montgomery, Davison, Hoffler, Shoosmith, Kozuch, Yates).**

Ms. Crumley accepted the Chairmanship.

2. Procurement Review Committee Report: Mr. Montgomery, Chairman of the Procurement Review Committee, reported that the Committee met in Richmond on February 10, 2005 and heard staff recommendations for changes to the Department's procedures for use of the American Express (AMEX) small purchase credit card, a method of payment that is used by state agencies. Additional methods of payment include checks issued through the Department of Accounts, wire transfers, interagency transfer, Voyager and VDOT small purchase payment cards for gasoline purchases and reimbursement to employees for actual out-of-pocket expenditures. The Committee was advised that the agency would incur additional costs if the use of AMEX small purchase card use was discontinued. The Department would be charged a fee of \$1.00 for checks issued by the Department of Accounts for purchases that could have been conducted with the AMEX small purchase card. All purchases via any of the identified methods of payment are within the agency's budget.

Mr. Montgomery indicated that the Committee would present interim recommendations and that final recommendations would be based upon the findings of an internal auditor's investigation that has not yet been completed. Upon receipt of the auditor's report, Board members will be afforded the opportunity to review the purchases being questioned.

The Committee consulted the Auditor of Public Accounts and the Department of Accounts (DOA) while conducting its review. Their recommendations for improvement were: (1) training for supervisors and users, (2) guidelines for supervisor or user non-compliance, and (3) non-compliance could result in counseling, loss of card use privileges and/or personnel action.

The committee's recommendations for pre-purchase controls for use of the AMEX small payment cards were: (1) a staff committee composed of the chief financial officer, the accounting manager, the purchase manager (with the addition of a Board member) will review all purchases of \$2,500 or more prior to a purchase; (2) the staff committee will review all planned events prior to any purchase, (3) incorporation of DOA training into agency training, and (4) upon the recommendation of the Procurement Review Committee, the internal committee will review all purchases made by the Director and senior staff. Post-purchase reviews will consist of (1) monthly review by the internal staff committee of any completed purchase of \$1,500 or more; (2) annual review by the internal staff committee of activity and authorization limits based on need and/or usage; (3) authorizations will be adjusted based on annual reviews, and (4) a monthly random review by the accounting manager of 10% of the agency's issued cards.

Mr. Montgomery noted for the record that contrary to media reports, agency employees did not and cannot exceed any authorized spending limits since spending limits are determined by the agency, based on job responsibilities, and enforced by American Express. To exceed the authorized spending limit, a supervisor's approval would be required, and that approval would be based on necessity. The proposed annual review of spending limits will insure that database information is accurately maintained.

Mr. Shoosmith moved, seconded by Mr. Railey, passed unanimously, that the Board adopt the above recommendations for staff's management of the AMEX small purchase cards. (Ayes: Shoosmith, Railey, Montgomery, Davison, Hoffler, Crumley, Kozuch and Yates).

John Montgomery was requested and agreed to represent the Board on the internal small purchase card procedures review committee.

3. Public Comment, Non-agenda Items: The public was afforded the opportunity to comment to the Board on topics not included on the announced agenda. Speakers were requested to restrict comments to three minutes.

Frank Banes, Richmond, Virginia indicated that he was interested in observing the Board meeting procedures to insure that his hunt club (Bulls Eye Hunt Club, Amelia County, Virginia) complied with all laws.

Paulette Albright, Montebello, Virginia commented that the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries had not complied with requirements of the Freedom of Information Act, and as such, its arrogance and autocratic management style led to the belief that the agency is entitled to special treatment. Additionally, she indicated that this arrogance can lead to the belief that personnel, equipment and land resources are available for personal indulgence and to the belief that a personal agenda is the best course for the agency. As a public agency, she indicated there was no room for tolerance for this type of corrosive attitude and those responsible for engaging in unethical behavior or condoning abusive behavior should be replaced. She asked that the Board take action to restore and start the healing process.

Leon Turner, Fincastle, Virginia, a former Chairman of the Board speaking on behalf of former members of the Board and concerned sportsmen and sportswomen indicated and that they considered the alleged conduct of Mr. Hoffler, Mr. Woodfin, Colonel Bradbery and Major Mike Caison inappropriate due to the adverse publicity created by “the African safari.” He indicated that an information packet had been sent to 38 former members of the Board and to current Board members detailing spending practices in many areas, and that those he represented felt the safari was just the “tip of the iceberg.” He provided Board members with a letter signed by 16 former Board members calling for the dismissal of the Director and the two law enforcement officers.

Catherine Tucker, Richmond, Virginia, a former member of the Board, expressed her continuing support for the staff of the agency and offered them her assistance, as necessary, in performing their duties.

Jack Randolph, Colonial Heights, Virginia, a former Board member and Chairman, a former assistant agency director, and an outdoor writer, expressed his respect for the staff of the Department and stated his condolences for staff being subjected to acts of cronyism and inappropriate acts of the agency brought to his attention by the news media. He questioned attendance at conferences where the wildlife director was not included and raised concerns for the same individuals attending the same conferences. He called for the Board to take action to get rid of the individuals involved.

Maxie Cameron, Front Royal, Virginia, representing Shenandoah County Archers called for an investigation of the allegations of malfeasance of Department funds.

Robert Pecora, Hume, Virginia, representing Two Rivers Archery Club, called for an investigation of the allegations of misuse of agency funds.

David Burpee, Springfield, Virginia, representing the Virginia Sports Club, called for an independent investigation, beyond the audit report, into the allegations of mismanagement that involve the Board, Department leadership and others as appropriate.

Jack Gwynn, Charlottesville, Virginia a retired employee of the Department, spoke in support of the Albrights' efforts. He called for the resignation of the Director and some of the other people involved in the scandal.

Michaele Upshur, Richmond, Virginia indicated that she is neither for nor against recent news reports. She indicated that she felt members of the Board had received their appointments due to productive work for the agency. She felt that all of the negative that has been printed recently will not be forgotten by the general public and stated that the adverse media would not go away until Mr. Woodfin, Mr. Hoffler, Major Caison and Colonel Bradbery resign.

Robert R. Merhige, III, Virginia Beach, Virginia stated that Director Woodfin and Commissioner Pruitt of the Virginia Marine Resources Commission are considered the best agency heads in state government by Virginia career civil servants. He questioned the time being spent investigating small purchase card acquisitions when productive employees require the right equipment to do a job. He stated further that agencies are required to distribute and use the AMEX small purchase card for all acquisitions under a specified amount, and that many state agencies receive annual audit points on the use of the small purchase card. He urged the Board to give the Director and senior staff its steadfast support that has been earned through years of dedicated and good state service and to allow them to return to fulfilling the Department's mission. He thanked Mr. Hoffler for his leadership of the Board.

Board member Charles Yates was requested to read into the meeting minutes the following letter received from former State Forester, James A. Garner. "Ladies and Gentlemen: Last October, I retired as State Forester with the Department of Forestry. I worked for DOF for over 46 years in various positions. In 1983, I was appointed State Forester. I was appointed by six Governors and served as agency director for over 21 years. The Department has two citizen boards, appointed by each Governor, and one advisory board which I established in 1988. I give you this background as a point of reference for the following comments.

From the beginning of our existence, the Department of Forestry and Game and Inland Fisheries have been closely wedded in our efforts. This cooperation and partnership focused on the protection and enhancement of our natural resources. This historical relationship can be traced back to the days of CCC.

Several years ago, Mr. Woodfin and I were successful in a legislative change mandating each agency would be guided in all we do solely by documented scientific evidence. This move would insure creditable science-based decisions for management decisions.

Each agency has a large constituency base. This constituency is diverse in values, philosophy and expectations. This diversity offers a constant source for potential conflicts and misunderstandings. Like our clients, the landscape of Virginia is vast and diverse in biology, habitat, and species, and it is changing rapidly.

During my 46 years I have witnessed significant change in our state, its people, the land and our agency. In 1983 we had about five million people. Today we have over seven million and counting. This mostly urban population is spilling into the rural countryside and bringing conflicts because of traditional land management practices. We are losing about 40,000 acres of forestland each year to other uses thus reducing our forest resources and stressing wildlife and its habitat. Conflicts between animals and humans are escalating and solutions are becoming more complex.

My challenge, as State Forester, was to address this new landscape, the expectations of the administration, the legislation, and most of all, the changing public. It meant the Department of Forestry had to change. Some long-standing programs and services were under constant review and adjustment. That provoked a change in culture and structure, change in programs and change in the jobs of our employees. This brought conflicts. We went through some trying times, inside and outside the agency. We were letting go of the old and searching for a new, uncertain future. In my humble opinion, change is the heart of the matter before you today. Change brings uncertainty and fear. Sometimes fear feeds anger and that leads to conflicts.

I see DGIF going through what the Department of Forestry went through several years ago; trying to position the agency to serve Virginia in the 21st century in a productive, efficient, and effective manner.

I have worked with the last five directors of Game and Inland Fisheries. Since 1994 I have worked closely with Bill Woodfin to develop joint and positive programs and services, thus maximizing our resources. The relationship between the two agencies has never been better. I have experienced Bill at the professional and personal level.

Based on my experience as State Forester, Bill has three critical qualities of an agency director. First, Bill understands the changes taking place in our state and how they will impact Virginia's wildlife. Second, he understands that the agency needs to change to meet the challenge and these changes will be painful. And finally, I think Bill has a clear vision of what needs to be done and the courage to move in that direction.

I hope your board will look carefully at the issues before you. Not the media hype, individual reactions, or philosophical differences. This is not necessarily about management styles or executive decisions. It is about leadership and about the future of our natural heritage. Thank you.” Signed Jim Garner

The second letter from Mark Duda, Executive Director of Responsive Management follows:

“Dear Members of the Board: The purpose of this letter is to show my strong and continued support for Mr. William L. Woodfin, Jr., as Director of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. I have known Director Woodfin in a professional capacity since 1995 and have worked closely with him on numerous projects regarding hunting and private lands management, poaching, alternative models of wildlife management, and the public image of the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries.

“My name is Mark Damian Duda. I am a native Virginian and the Executive Director of Responsive Management, an organization dedicated to assisting natural resource and outdoor recreation organizations better understand and work with the public, including the general public, hunters and landowners. Over the past 15 years I have worked with almost every state fish and wildlife agency in the nation, including most of the directors of these agencies. With this background, I can say that Director Woodfin is one of the best and most dedicated directors of a state fish and wildlife agency with whom I have ever worked. And this is among a field of highly qualified and exceptional directors. While I believe Director Woodfin has many excellent character traits, I believe his most important has been a keen and ongoing interest in obtaining information on how to make the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries a more effective organization and how the Department can be more responsive to the Virginia public as well as the state’s hunters and anglers.

Since I met director Woodfin he has been strongly interested in learning how the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (Department) could better serve Virginians as a whole and, in particular, hunters and landowners. This interest resulted in several studies that provided information to Director Woodfin on various wildlife conservation and management strategies.

In 1996 I was commissioned by the Department to study private landowners in Virginia and how the Department could work with private landowners to enhance hunting opportunities and wildlife management on private lands. This study provided twelve policy recommendations and specifically discussed the issue of game ranching practices in Africa (Responsive Management, 1996, “Incentives for and Challenges in Market-Based Wildlife Recreation on Private Lands in Virginia, “report commissioned by the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, 50pp.).

Director Woodfin's interest in various wildlife conservation policies and strategies, especially those used in Africa, continued since this initial report was submitted in 1996. In January 2004, I met with Director Woodfin on the subject of wildlife management and policy in Africa and what we could learn as it related to wildlife management in Virginia. This meeting took place after I presented a workshop on these subjects at the SCI annual conference. We discussed the pros and cons of African wildlife management policy and the issue of private lands management for hunting, including the impact of such a system on the provision of hunting opportunities in Virginia.

Perhaps the greatest commitment Director Woodfin has shown to enhancing the credibility of the Department and reaching out to Virginians was the study with which I was involved (in partnership with Virginia Tech and George Mason University) titled "House Bill 38 and Future Directions for the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries." In this study, Director Woodfin asked us to help him better understand the Virginia public, hunters, and landowners to assist him in providing better services to the citizens of Virginia. This study consisted not only of an in-depth study of how the Virginia public viewed wildlife but also included major studies of hunters' and landowners' attitudes on various natural resource and outdoor recreation issues.

I believe Director Woodfin's efforts are paying off for the Commonwealth and specifically for the Department. In a just-completed study on Virginia residents' attitudes toward fish and wildlife management in Virginia sponsored by the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies under a grant from the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries repeatedly received high marks from the Virginia public and high ratings of credibility. In this scientific survey of Virginia residents 18 years old and older, 56% of Virginians said they were either very or somewhat satisfied with the Department as a governmental agency in Virginia, while only 4% said that they were either very or somewhat dissatisfied (the rest answered, "Don't know," or "Neither"). In another question, six times the number of Virginians agreed than disagreed that the Department effectively balances the interests of anglers, hunters, conservation groups, and the general public (54% agreed, while 9% disagreed, while the rest did not know). Finally, among 11 different groups and organizations presented to the Virginia public, the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries was considered the most credible on issues related to fish and wildlife management in the Commonwealth; over and above professors at universities, sportsmen's organizations, environmental organizations, etc. I believe these most recent survey numbers indicate that Director Woodfin's efforts on enhancing the image and credibility of the Department are paying off.

During my 10-year association with Director Woodfin, he has consistently displayed a deep curiosity about various wildlife management options and what the Department could learn from them to enhance the hunting experience for Virginia hunters. He has

made every attempt to gain a thorough understanding of hunters, the factors related to hunting participation, and private lands management. I have personally seen first-hand his deep commitment to increasing his own knowledge on these subjects in order to make the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries a better agency and more responsive to Virginians, private landowners, and hunters. I believe this is important and beneficial to the Department, given the Department's mission to manage Virginia's wildlife and inland fish to maintain optimum populations of all species to serve the needs of the Commonwealth, as well as to provide opportunity for all to enjoy wildlife, inland fish, boating, and related outdoor recreation." Signed Mark Damian Duda, Executive Director, Responsive Management, Harrisonburg, Virginia.

Ward Burton, Halifax Virginia. Mr. Burton spoke on behalf of the Ward Burton Wildlife Foundation. He indicated that those with whom he works feel their long-lasting relationship with the Department has been great and on-going since establishing a relationship with Director Woodfin. He added that Mr. Woodfin has assisted in the development of a wildlife model to reach and educate youth, landowners and teachers. This initiative is well underway, and he thanked Mr. Woodfin for his efforts. Mr. Burton stated that he has discussed ongoing issues with game wardens, three past Board members and other natural resources conservation leaders, and 100% of the game wardens support the Director and the Board and the leadership provided. They indicated that they are better equipped than ever and that they have better resources. He felt that wardens are doing a better job than ever and attributed that to Mr. Woodfin being in the field and observing game wardens' needs. The agency's outdoors education programs have also flourished under Mr. Woodfin's leadership. He urged the Board to be proactive to prevent any similar non-productive struggles from occurring and encouraged all to work together for our resources. He indicated that to fully understand our resources we need to look beyond our borders to learn what others are doing. He encouraged the Director to participate in future trips to place us in a position to take better care of our natural resources.

Kenny Parr, Spring Grove, Virginia. Mr. Parr indicated that he had read the newspaper articles alleging inappropriate expenditures for a trip to Africa and he asked the Board if an agency document existed to confirm specific expenditures for such a trip. He suggested that a review of small purchase card logs by others may have lead to an assumption that agency purchases made prior to the scheduled trip were for that specific purpose. He encouraged the Board to not allow public opinion to influence its decisions regarding Director Woodfin and his staff. He asked the Board to use its annual performance evaluation of the Director as its tool for providing an unbiased evaluation based on Mr. Woodfin's performance. He also asked the Board to share the results of the internal audit with the public. He expressed his support for the Director and his staff.

Dennis Campbell, Waynesboro, Virginia recognized Mr. Hoffler for his dedication to Virginia's sportsmen. He encouraged others to reserve personal opinions until the

internal audit results are released. He spoke in support of Mr. Woodfin's accomplishments and stated that he felt that based on his observations, Virginia now has the best Director, Wildlife Division, Law Division and best Board. He added his support for the director, the staff, the Board and the sportsmen of Virginia.

Mike Roberts, Evington, Virginia. Mr. Roberts is a wildlife educator in Virginia's schools. His program reaches approximately 30,000 students annually. He indicated that he had read the recent newspaper reports and has looked for the other side of the issue to receive equal publicity. He added that several years ago, he invited Mr. Woodfin to participate in a youth wild turkey hunt that was sponsored by Return to Nature. After Mr. Woodfin's participation, a complaint was made to the Fraud, Waste and Abuse Hotline that resulted in an investigation by the Office of the Internal Auditor. Mr. Roberts was afforded the opportunity to describe Mr. Woodfin's role in that event. He spoke in support of Mr. Woodfin and Mr. Hoffler and stated that the trip to Africa and his participation in conferences is a part of Mr. Woodfin's responsibility as it helps to educate people.

Hugh Crittenden, Chesterfield, Virginia spoke on behalf of the Virginia Outdoor Show held annually in Richmond over the second weekend of August. As the show's operator, Mr. Crittenden stated that he repeatedly receives positive public input on the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries' participation in the outdoors-related event. He indicated that Mr. Woodfin supported the acquisition of interactive shooting equipment that teaches safety and promotes hunting. He commended and thanked Mr. Woodfin for his work to promote hunting throughout the state.

Bob Errett, Mint Spring, Virginia, President of Parker Compound Bows commented on Department staff's participation in trade shows around the country. He stated that it is at these shows that the hunting community comes together and it affords the opportunity for manufacturers to meet state and national wildlife officials. He indicated that manufacturers of hunting equipment are strong supporters of all outdoors programs, including those of the National Wild Turkey Federation, the Archery in Schools Programs, Quality Deer Management, Becoming an Outdoors Woman program and all hunter safety programs. Because these manufacturers are a funding source for wildlife agencies, he urged and encouraged the participation of the Department's staff. He stated that he felt that the calls for the resignations of Mr. Woodfin, Colonel Bradbery and Michael Caison were most inappropriate as there are no substantiated reasons for their resignations. He expressed his regrets to Mr. Hoffler for his resignation and for the loss to the sportsmen of Virginia.

Steve Fritton, Mechanicsville, Virginia spoke in support of the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries and its staff. He attributed the Department's success to the direction provided by Mr. Woodfin. The agency has been proactive in providing additional youth hunting opportunities. He asked staff and the Board to consider adding a fall youth

turkey-hunting day during its next scheduled regulatory review cycle. He added that the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries is highly respected, and that he has grown to trust Director Woodfin and his staff.

Johnny Grace, Broadway, Virginia. Mr. Grace is associated with Parker Compound Bows and as such he interacts with government agencies and their employees throughout the country. He spoke in support of Mr. Woodfin, Colonel Bradbery and Major Caison based on his personal interaction with them in various settings. He stated that they are dedicated to improving the management of wildlife resources and the life of Virginia's sportsmen. He added his firm support for Director Woodfin and his staff.

Michael Holson, Bumpass, Virginia indicated that he felt that the closing of a fish hatchery in Montebello to public visitation may be the underlying contributor to the negative news reports. He asked why, before an internal audit investigation is complete, that newspaper reports are attacking in nature and imply that the agency's leadership has acted improperly. He asked how the agency can have meaningful communication with individuals when their actions lead one to question their motive. He asked why secret meetings were conducted with game wardens and agency employees in the Montebello area. He added that an environment of mistrust has been created with the misuse of agency personnel documents to lend credibility to a personal agenda. He asked if any confidential information about the agency has been compromised and what will be done if this has occurred. He questioned whether this effort has been fueled by an anti-hunting sentiment. He stated that Mr. Woodfin, the Department and its staff should be applauded for their foresight to see beyond our state's borders into the national and international communities that protect wildlife and promote shooting sports. He stated that as an agency volunteer, he has not witnessed any misappropriation of state funds or favoritism for any program. The agency's focus has been to make the outdoors resources accessible to sportsmen and non-sportsmen through quality programs. He added his support for Mr. Woodfin, Colonel Bradbery, Major Caison, the Board and all agency staff through the wearing of green ribbons that he was distributing at the meeting.

Dean Miller, Colonial Heights, Virginia spoke in support of the Department. He supported the implementation of the automated telephone checking system where over 96,300 deer were checked, and stated that, based on his personal knowledge of printing costs, this method of checking deer has resulted in a savings of over \$20,000 to the Department. The Hunters for the Hungry program received 333,536 pounds of venison to benefit the state's needy. This program has continuously been supported by the Board and the Department. He also commended Department staff for its assistance in outdoors shows and other events.

Ms. Crumley called for a break at 10:35 a.m. and the meeting reconvened at 10:50 a.m.

Roger Buyn, Cheriton, Virginia. As a former member of the Board, Mr. Buyn spoke in support of the Department and its staff. He stated that employees being criticized are honorable and committed, and indicated that other state agencies could not accomplish what the Department has achieved with its limited staff and budget. He questioned the motives of disgruntled employees resisting change and was distraught over decisions being made based simply on what is being read in the news media and asked that the media be fair in its reports. He commended agency staff for its efforts to provide adequate equipment for its employees, since as a Board member, he knew that in past years, this was not done.

King Montgomery, Burke, Virginia, a freelance writer and photographer and a retired federal government employee, spoke in support of the Department and its staff. As an outdoor writer he talks with citizens of the Commonwealth, and he has heard very few disparaging comments, nor has he heard anything negative about the leaders of the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. He commended Mr. Woodfin for his commitment to the resources of the state and its sportsmen, sportswomen and to the Department's mission and staff.

Barrett Hardiman, Richmond, Virginia. Representing the Virginia Association of Marine Industries, Mr. Hardiman spoke in support of the Department and its staff. He indicated that the Association supports Mr. Woodfin as the agency's director and feel that he has been the best all-around executive director over the last 20 years.

John Wetlaufer, Sr., Mechanicsville, Virginia spoke in support of the Department and its staff. He indicated that over the years, he has worked directly with Department staff to improve the agency's funding base, and has no reservations about staff's dedication in carrying out the work of the Department. He felt the Department has accomplished much with its available resources, and that citizens are provided many opportunities to participate in decisions.

Braxton Bell, Midlothian, Virginia. Mr. Bell indicated that he retired from the Virginia State Police, and throughout his years with that organization, he had the opportunity to enjoy a professional working relationship with Department of Game and Inland Fisheries employees at all levels. He has also known past and present Board members, and respects the Department and its employees. As an interested citizen, he has followed the published accounts of recent events, and has compared them with his everyday experiences at all levels of his career, and sees many similarities. He felt that a controversy at this level is fueled by emotion and misguided perceptions. Mr. Bell stated that he saw Mr. Woodfin as an effective leader who has served the Commonwealth honorably.

Malcolm Wells, Richmond, Virginia representing the Richmond Dove Association, stated that he felt that Mr. Woodfin and staff have taken enforcement to a higher level.

Game wardens are viewed more favorably and many complimentary remarks are heard about how they conduct their duties. During his association with the Department, he has seen it come from one of an average status to a first rate agency that receives national recognition. He asked everyone present to look back over the last 20 years to see how far the Department has progressed, and to witness the professionalism and enthusiasm of its staff, which he attributed to good leadership.

Robert Abernathy, Edgefield, South Carolina. Representing the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF), Mr. Abernathy read into the record a letter written to Governor Mark Warner by Rob Keck, CEO for the NWTF and Dr. James Earl Kenamer, Senior Vice-President for Conservation Programs.

“Dear Governor Warner: The National Wild Turkey Federation and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries have partnered for over 25 years on a number of projects that have benefited both wildlife habitat and wild turkeys in the Commonwealth. The National Wild Turkey Federation has contributed \$258,000 to enhance habitat and spent over \$92,023 on research projects that provide useful information to manage wild turkey populations throughout North America. We have spent that money in Virginia. Our partnership has grown largely due to the leadership of Mr. Bill Woodfin. His professional approach to maximize the benefits of the dollars available to manage wildlife populations and to protect them has been a model for other agencies to follow. This has been extremely valuable in these times of limited budgets and available personnel. Bill recently was asked to be one of two agency directors to participate in a turkey hunter safety task force that we reconvened at the National Wild Turkey Federation Wild Turkey Center in Edgefield, South Carolina. His insight into the problems and solutions were extremely valuable to the task force. The NWTF supports Bill in his position as Director and looks forward to working with him and his staff to manage wildlife and protect the hunting heritage in Virginia.” Signed Rob Keck and Dr. James Earl Kenamer

Mr. Abernathy added that the NWTF has just completed its annual convention in Nashville where over 40,000 participated. This included wildlife directors and senior staff from 12 states, senior wildlife biologists from 29 states and one Canadian province, and the senior management from the Bureau of Land Management, NRCS and the U. S. Forest Service. He felt that it was appropriate for a wildlife agency director to attend this convention and to network with others of similar responsibilities. This contact benefits the state’s wildlife with over \$340,000 having come into the state as a result of the NWTF/VDGIF relationship.

Denny Quaiff, Richmond, Virginia indicated that he has appeared at Board meetings for over 20 years, speaking in support of and in opposition to issues. He added that this 89-year old agency still works for the best interest of the citizens of the Commonwealth, and that under Mr. Woodfin’s leadership the agency has continued to progress. In 2000

the Virginia Heritage Foundation was formed and worked to have the Constitutional Amendment to Hunt and Fish passed by the state's voters. In 2003 the Department implemented a 24-hour radio dispatch service, and worked with the General Assembly to have a voluntary \$2.00 check-off created to benefit the Hunters for the Hungry program. The Department, along with a citizens' board have developed the Virginia Deer Management Plan and a new advisory board has been convened to revise the current Virginia Deer Management Plan. A deer research project is underway in Amelia County that is being sponsored by the Virginia Deer Hunters Association, Virginia Tech and the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries. He was supportive of the agency's accomplishments under Mr. Woodfin's leadership.

Charles G. McDaniel, Fredericksburg, Virginia. As a former member and Chairman of the Board, Mr. McDaniel showed support for the Department and its staff. Mr. McDaniel indicated he was appointed to the Board at the same time that Mr. Woodfin was sent to the agency as its acting director. At that time, the Department was experiencing leadership and financial problems, and had received over 40 audit points from the state auditor. The Department did not utilize technology and game wardens did not have the equipment needed to perform their jobs. He stated that Bill Woodfin, with the Board's support, has lead this Department from the bottom to being one of the best in the United States. He added that he felt that those with an interest in the Montebello Fish Hatchery are using the African trip to go after the agency's leadership.

Mr. McDaniel commented that the Montebello Fish Cultural Station serves as a holding area to grow trout to a stockable size. The facility does not have an adequate water supply and its infrastructure is inadequate. Consultants have recommended that it be closed, and Mr. Woodfin, in a time of budget stress, recommended that the facility be closed to public visitation for good reason. He stated that the press has not written anything about the real problems at Montebello, and he felt that the attention of the press has been vicious. He noted that with the exception of one attempt when he was out of the country, the press has made no attempt to contact him for a statement, even though he is quite knowledgeable about the agency. He called for the Board to support Mr. Woodfin, to receive the audit report and take any necessary steps needed to begin to address pay, funding and morale problems within the game wardens' rank.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their comments, and assured the public that if problems are identified, the Board will address them.

4. Minutes of October 21, 2004 Meeting. Draft minutes of the October 21, 2004 meeting have been posted on the agency's Website and copies were included with the meeting briefing materials. Ms. Crumley called for any additions or corrections to the minutes. As there were none, **Mr. Hoffler moved, seconded by Mr. Davison, passed unanimously that the minutes be approved as written. (Ayes: Crumley, Hoffler, Davison, Montgomery, Railey, Shoosmith, Kozuch and Yates).**

5. Closed Session: In open session at 11:30 a.m., Mr. Railey moved, seconded by Mr. Montgomery, passed unanimously, that the Board go into a closed meeting pursuant to section 2.2-3711.A.3 of the Code of Virginia for discussion or consideration of the acquisition of real property for public purpose or the disposition of publicly held real property with response to an acquisition by gift in James City County and a property acquisition of lands located in the counties of Appomattox, Buckingham and Prince Edward, and further, pursuant to section 2.2-3711. A.7 of the Code of Virginia for consultation with legal counsel pertaining to actual litigation, namely Lee H. Albright v. the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries regarding the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. (Ayes: Crumley, Railey, Davison, Montgomery, Hoffler, Shoosmith, Kozuch and Yates).

In open session at 11:55 a.m., Mr. Railey certified, seconded by Mr. Montgomery, passed unanimously, that whereas the Board of Game and Inland Fisheries had convened a closed meeting on this date pursuant to an affirmative recorded vote and in accordance with the provisions of the Virginia Freedom of Information Act, and whereas section 2.2-3712.D of the Code requires a certification by this Board that such closed meeting was conducted in conformity with Virginia law, now therefore be it resolved that the Board of Game and Inland Fisheries hereby certifies that (i) to the best of each members knowledge only public business matters lawfully exempted from open meeting requirements by Virginia law were discussed in the closed meeting to which this certification resolution applies, and (ii) only such public business matters as were identified in the motion convening the closed meeting were heard, discussed or considered by the Board.

Mr. Davison moved, seconded by Mr. Railey, passed unanimously, that the Board authorize the Director to proceed to acquire approximately 2800 acres of land, more or less, in Appomattox, Buckingham and Prince Edward Counties, Virginia, and such acquisition shall be according to applicable state procedures, and provided such action is so authorized in the appropriate budget amendment. (Ayes: Crumley, Davison, Railey, Montgomery, Hoffler, Kozuch and Yates).

Mr. Davison moved, seconded by Mr. Montgomery, passed unanimously, that the Board authorize the Director to proceed to acquire by gift approximately 40 acres more or less of land in James City County to be known as the Green Springs Tract, and any conditions of conveyance shall be within the parameters of the Department's mission and consistent with the operation of a wildlife management area, and such authorization shall be according to the state procedures, not to exceed \$5,000 in total costs. (Ayes: Crumley, Davison, Kozuch, Montgomery, Hoffler, Railey and Yates).

The meeting was recessed for lunch at noon and reconvened at 1:00 p.m.

A request by **Dennis Mullins** to speak on a non-agenda item was received after the Board had completed that part of the agenda, so at this time, Ms. Crumley afforded him the opportunity to address the Board. He was not present when recognized.

Recognition of Employees and Others: Colonel Terry Bradbery was recognized. He introduced and awarded recognition plaques to the regional and state Game Wardens of the Year. Sergeant Paul Booth, assigned to Dinwiddie County, was recognized as the Region II Game Warden of the Year. Office Rolland J. Cox, assigned to Smyth County, was recognized as the Region III Game Warden of the Year. Officer Elmo Herndon, assigned to Rockingham County was recognized as the Region IV Game Warden of the Year. Officer Charles Steve Ferguson, assigned to Albemarle County, was recognized as the Region V Game Warden of the Year. The 2005 State Game Warden of the Year, Sergeant Henry W. “Hank” Garner, is a resident of King and Queen County and represents Region I.

Gary Martel announced that Tom Gunter has been presented the Taylor Turner Conservation Award by the Fly Fishermen of Virginia. Mr. Gunter has taken a leadership role in the state’s shad restoration program.

A. L. “Bud” LaRoche, III was recognized by the Virginia State Chapter of the American Fisheries Society with the Eugene W. Surber Professional Biologist Award. Mr. LaRoche was recognized for his leadership role on fisheries issues and FERC licensing work.

James Adams presented the States’ Organization for Boating Access (SOBA) award for Outstanding Service to Phil Lownes for his efforts to provide access to the public waters of the state. SOBA is a national organization.

Charles Hayden, representing the **Mid-Atlantic Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America**, presented a check in the amount of \$3,045 to the Department to be used to develop additional handicap access piers on Virginia’s waters. These funds are raised at the ProAm Classic through ticket sales.

Board members recognized departing Board Chairman Dan Hoffler for all that he has done for the Department and the Board. Ms. Crumley commended him for seeing the agency successfully elevated to a level I status. He was commended for his integrity, principles, honesty and loyalty.

Board member Richard Railey recognized Mr. Hoffler for the tremendous service that he has provided to the Commonwealth through his leadership, enthusiasm and dedication to a cause.

Board member Randy Kozuch thanked Mr. Hoffler for all he has done for the Board, indicating that it was an honor to serve under his leadership.

Board member John Montgomery recognized Mr. Hoffler for his achievements, his guidance, his generosity and his leadership.

Board member Marshall Davison stated that he was initially impressed by Mr. Hoffler's energy and has come to appreciate his ability to focus to get a job done.

Board member Charles Yates stated that Mr. Hoffler's commitment to the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries is unsurpassed. He recognized him for that commitment and thanked him for his efforts.

Mr. Woodfin added that it has been a pleasure to serve under Mr. Hoffler's leadership. He stated that the sportsmen and sportswomen have lost much with Mr. Hoffler's departure from the Board.

Mr. Hoffler thanked all and added that it has been an honor to serve on the Board. He recognized Mr. Woodfin for his loyalty and integrity, adding that the Commonwealth should feel honored to have him in the position of Director.

He recognized Major Mike Caison for the long hours he worked for the Constitutional amendment to hunt and fish and to have the game wardens included in an enhanced retirement benefits program.

Colonel Terry Bradbery was recognized for his ability to care about everyone working for the Department.

Mr. Hoffler requested the press to present the positive comments heard about the Department and asked them to be fair in their reporting.

Mr. Hoffler asked that the record reflect the following statement.

"I have been honored to serve on this Board. Honored to serve with you. Many of you have become my friends. It was a pleasure working with Bill, Terry, Mike, Charlie, Ray, Bob and so many others. They sincerely care about this department and deserve a great deal of credit. We as a Board accomplished a lot working together as a team. Always putting DGIF first. I am proud of that fact.

People want to know why I resigned. Many people are angry hearing the news, however, I know I have become a lightning rod for those who would like to take control of this board. They would manage from afar, dictating policy and direction. You must not let that happen. You were appointed by the Governor to do a job, with your only

compensation being to fulfill that commitment. I know you will do just that because I know you.

In closing, let me say we have one of the best game departments in the country. Bill Woodfin and his team in large measure have made this so.

Now, let's focus on what's right and fix what's wrong without sacrificing people who in many cases were not even given the chance to respond to hurtful, unfounded allegations. I ask you, is this fair, is this right? I am not blaming anyone, but perception becomes reality. It's now your job to sort out the difference. Good luck and God bless." Signed Daniel A. Hoffler

Ms. Crumley provided an opportunity for constituents to address the Board on wildlife-related issues.

Jim Wilson, Martinsville, Virginia asked that the grouse hunting season be extended to the end of February. He indicated that he has discussed the topic with game wardens and others and has been told that hunting is not the problem with grouse.

Joseph W. Smith, Jr., Craig County, Virginia requested the Board to extend the grouse hunting season to the end of February.

6. Crossbow Regulation Proposal: Bob Duncan presented a proposal to create a special crossbow license as allowed by 2005 enacted legislation, and to allow all hunters to use a crossbow for hunting beginning with the 2005 hunting season.

Amend 4 VAC 15-40-20 to (i) remove the reference on the prohibition of crossbows, and (ii) to remove the requirement that persons permanently disabled must have a medical statement to use a crossbow.

Add 4 VAC 15-40-21 to create a special crossbow license and establish fees for persons using a crossbow during the special archery seasons. The proposed fee is \$12.00 for residents and \$25.00 for non-residents with the addition of the license agent fee of \$0.50.

Mr. Duncan also presented the following proposed public input meeting schedule: All meetings will be held from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

Region I, Williamsburg Regional Office, **April 21, 2005**
Region II, Central Virginia Community College, **April 7, 2005**
Region III, Wytheville Community College, **April 21, 2005**
Region IV, Augusta County Government Center, **April 6, 2005**
Region V, DGIF Headquarters, 4000 West Broad, **April 6, 2005**
Fairfax County at IWLA in Centreville, **April 13, 2005**

After Board members discussed the crossbow proposal, members of the public were afforded the opportunity to comment. Mr. Davison commented for the record that he heard comments from archery hunters that they objected to the crossbow being allowed for use during the special archery seasons.

David Proctor, Linville, Virginia, representing Bowhunters of Rockingham/Virginia Bowhunters Association opposed the introduction of the crossbow into the regular archery season. He indicated that they did not oppose the crossbow for hunting, they just objected it its use during the special archery season. He also asked for clarification regarding the legislation being approved as an emergency measure.

Robert Pecora, Hume, Virginia representing the Two Rivers Archery Club spoke in opposition to allowing the use of crossbows during the special archery seasons. He did not object to the use of crossbows for hunting outside the archery seasons. He also questioned why the proposal was being advanced as an emergency action.

Frank Houff, Glen Allen, Virginia was not present when called.

Maxie Cameron, Front Royal, Virginia, representing Shenandoah County Archery objected to the use of the crossbow during the special archery seasons.

David Burpee, Springfield, Virginia, representing Virginia Sports Club questioned why the crossbow proposal was being advanced as an emergency measure without consideration for safety and its impact on the quality of hunting by sportsmen using other methods to hunt deer. He suggested that the Department provide an adequate process for all concerned parties to state their views before changes are made to regulations and that action be delayed until the 2006 hunting season. He asked if safety issues had been considered and noted that one military installation in Virginia will prohibit the use of the crossbow due to safety concerns.

Gary Buracker, Rockville, Virginia was seeking clarification on the impact of the crossbow proposal on its use by disabled hunters. He expressed concerns for the nonresident fee schedule. He offered that increasing doe days would be a better management tool for the deer population.

Jim Remington, Richmond, Virginia was not present when recognized.

John Trees, Warm Spring, Virginia, a member of the Bath County Board of Supervisors, concurred with Mr. Buracker's comments and felt that crossbows should only be allowed for use by disabled hunters. He asked why the measure was being advanced as an emergency.

Mr. Trees referenced deer harvest data for Bath County and indicated that the number of harvested deer continues to decline. He recommended that the use of crossbows not be allowed for hunting in Virginia or that the use be restricted to elderly and disabled hunters.

On behalf of the Bath County Board of Supervisors, Mr. Trees also requested that electronic game checking not be allowed in Bath County due to its negative impact on the county's economy. He added that the County would be submitting a resolution to the Board to request that the county be removed from the electronic checking process.

Mr. Railey read into the record a letter presented to him by Melvin Jacks. "Since there are only so many days in the hunting season for deer, how can you split the season to allow for archery hunting. It would be great if both bow and crossbow hunting could work together. There seems to be fewer and fewer archery hunters and the older hunters have a difficult time drawing back a traditional bow. Could a crossbow be used in special urban areas?

I live in an urban area where no firearms are allowed. I own six acres of land in this area. Could I use a crossbow during archery deer season as well as during firearm season? Is it necessary to have a crossbow license to hunt on my own property? Could I hunt the entire deer season with a crossbow, as long as I stay within the limit set for the number of bucks and does allowed to be taken in firearm season. Is it necessary to wear blaze orange in areas where firearms are not allowed?" Signed Melvin Jacks

Johnny Grace, an archery expert, provided clarification on the benefits of the crossbow. He compared its use to that of the compound bow, and indicated that it is a tremendous recruitment tool. He indicated that crossbows have not had a detrimental impact where allowed on the users of traditional archery equipment.

Mr. Duncan noted for the record that the emergency clause only allows the Board to consider the crossbow issue in a time frame that would allow it to be used during the 2005 hunting season if the measure is eventually approved by the Board after a completed public input period.

Mr. Railey moved, seconded by Mr. Montgomery, passed unanimously that the Board approve for advertisement the proposed regulation amendments for 4 VAC 15-40-20 and 4 VAC 25-40-21 as presented by staff, and further that the Board approve the recommended schedule for the six public input meetings. (Ayes: Railey, Montgomery, Davison, Crumley, Kozuch and Yates).

Board members were advised that with the approval of the regulation proposal for advertisement, any individual comments heard from interested citizens must be shared with the full Board for the official record prior to recording a final vote on the measure.

Boat Registration Fees: Charlie Sledd presented staff's recommendation to have the Board ratify a previously approved regulation for boat registration fees by again **adopting the current language of 4 VAC 15-380-120** and updating the current authority for this regulation to reflect § 29.1-701.1. The current fee schedule for a motorboat under 16 feet is \$27.00; for a motorboat 16 feet to less than 20 feet (\$31.00), for a motorboat 20 feet to less than 40 feet (\$37.00), for a motorboat 40 feet and over (\$45.00), for the first 10 actively registered motorboats by the same owner (\$27.00); for more than 10 actively registered motorboats by the same owner (\$21.00) and for a duplicate certificate of registration and/or decal (\$9.00).

Mr. Davison moved, seconded by Mr. Railey, passed unanimously, that the Board adopt the current language of 4 VAC 15-380-120 regarding certificate of registration fees to make reference to the Board's statutory authority to set fees in accordance with Code of Virginia § 29.1-701.1. This action is considered a proposed regulation amendment and the proposal will be published in the Virginia Register. Final action will be taken by the Board at its June 23, 2005 meeting. (Ayes: Davison, Railey, Montgomery, Crumley, Kozuch and Yates.)

Overview of New Regulatory Cycle: Mr. Sledd presented an overview of the 2005 periodic review and amendment process for wildlife, fisheries, boating and wildlife diversity regulations. This new process significantly expands public involvement in regulatory issues before either staff recommendations or Board proposals are made and it increases the administrative efficiency by combining two alternating periodic regulation review cycles into a single one. Under this process, the Board will approve for advertisement regulation proposals at its August 18, 2005 meeting. A formal public comment period will open at that time, and the Board will take final action on the advertised proposals at its October 27, 2005 meeting. The approved regulations will become effective on July 1, 2006. If necessary, the Board will have the option of implementing an earlier effective date for regulations.

The following proposed public input meeting schedule for regulatory issues was presented to the Board for approval: May 23, 2005, Holiday Inn, Suffolk, May 25, 2005, Halifax County High School, May 26, 2005 Augusta County Government Center, May 31, 2005 Izaak Walton League Building, Centreville, Virginia, June 2, 2005, Virginia Highlands Community College, Abingdon, Virginia, June 6, 2005 DGIF Headquarters, 4000 West Broad Street, Richmond, and June 7, 2005 Northside High School, Roanoke. All meetings will be held from 6:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.

The proposed public meeting series for regulation proposals that will be approved for advertisement at the August 18, 2005 meeting are: August 29, 2005, Virginia Highlands Community College, Abingdon, August 30, 2005, Wytheville Community College, Wytheville, August 31, 2005, Northside High School, Roanoke, September 6, 2005,

Shenandoah County Board of Supervisors, Woodstock, September 7, 2005, Augusta County Government Center, Verona, September 8, 2005 Izaak Walton League Building, Centreville, September 19, 2005, Madison Fire Department Fire Hall, Madison, September 20, 2005, DGIF Headquarters, 4000 West Broad Street, Richmond, September 21, 2005, Halifax County High School, South Boston, September 22, 2005, Holiday Inn, Suffolk and September 26, 2005, Richmond County (Warsaw), Rappahannock Community College.

Mr. Montgomery moved approval of the above proposed meeting schedule, seconded by Mr. Davison, passed unanimously. (Ayes: Montgomery, Davison, Railey, Crumley, Kozuch and Yates.)

Boating Issues: Mr. Sledd noted that staff has not identified any boating regulatory issues.

Fisheries Issues: Gary Martel presented the following areas for potential fisheries regulations: (1) Simplify largemouth bass length limit regulations on reservoirs, (2) improve angler catch of trophy smallmouth bass, musky, and blue catfish in rivers, (3) improve the quality of striped bass and walleye fishing in reservoirs, (4) modify anadromous fish limits and netting regulations in Virginia tributaries of the Chowan River and Currituck Sound (southeast Virginia), and (5) expand trout fishing diversity and opportunity. Changes are being considered based upon angler and creel surveys data and management work including population surveys, age and growth analysis and electro-sampling.

Wildlife Diversity Issues: David Whitehurst presented the following areas where wildlife diversity regulatory issues exist: (1) Continuing threat of nonindigenous (exotic) species to Virginia's native wildlife and habitats, (2) collection, sale and possession of wildlife, and (3) threatened and endangered species, continuing decline of Virginia's at-risk native wildlife species and habitats. Areas of concern focus on the continued threat posed to Virginia's native populations from the introduction of exotic species such as the zebra mussel and the snakehead fish and from predatory species' impacts on native populations. Staff is also looking at the decline of certain species in Virginia, and may propose the addition of these species to the state's threatened and endangered species list.

Wildlife, Hunting and Trapping Regulation Issues: Bob Duncan entered into the record a request received from **Thomas R. Gurzo, Boydton, Virginia** asking that consideration be given to creating safety zones within 500' of a private residence relative to deer hound hunting and from **Matthew Crowder, Ashland, Virginia** requesting an extension of the predatory hunting season for fox and bobcat.

Mr. Duncan presented areas where changes are being considered for wildlife, hunting and trapping regulations: (1) address deer population objectives through antlerless deer

harvest, (2) problems associated with the artificial feeding of white-tailed deer statewide, particularly as it relates to the hunting season, (3) increase recreational opportunities for small game hunting by looking at Saturday openings and non-traditional seasons, (4) increase recreational opportunities for bear hound training to address the increasing number of bear damage complaints, (5) definition of a fence which allows for the unimpeded movements of deer as provided by the Code of Virginia, (6) designation of non-native and invasive bird species as nuisance species in Virginia (mute swan), and (7) improve trapping efficiency for certain species.

An opportunity was provided for the public to present desired regulatory changes to the Board and staff.

William Ermstes, King William, Virginia representing the Virginia Catfish Association, expressed a concern for the over harvest of trophy catfish. To protect the larger fish, he suggested the implementation of a length limit of 35 to 36 inches along with a creel limit of one trophy fish per boat per day.

Bob Bowers, Roanoke, Virginia asked the Board and staff to consider legalizing the 40 caliber muzzleloader and smokeless powder for use during the muzzleloader season.

Brian Bowers, Providence Forge, Virginia requested staff and the Board, due to safety concerns for motorists, to extend the deer hunting season and perhaps increase the number of allowed doe days. He suggested that full season either sex deer hunting be allowed in the counties of New Kent and James City or that the season open with a full week of antlerless hunting

Brian Nelson, Shenandoah, Virginia, representing the Virginia Trappers Association, requested staff and the Board to consider the addition of a experimental otter season west of the Blue Ridge. He suggested that a limited harvest will help determine population and biological data on that area's otter population.

Mitch Forrester, Kilmarnock, Virginia was not present when recognized. On his behalf, Mr. Davison shared that Mr. Forrester was interested in seeing the quail season extended through February. Mr. Forrester indicated in a letter to Mr. Davison that he had been involved in the quail survey, but has not received the completed quail survey results.

Director's Report: Charlie Sledd presented an overview of legislation during the 2005 General Assembly session that was tracked by the Department. A mandatory duck stamp was enacted during the 2005 session, and the General Assembly enacted legislation that prohibits computer assisted hunting. Budget amendments provide for an interest free Treasury loan to the Department for the acquisition of property to serve as a wildlife management area and the Department will receive an additional allocation of the watercraft sales and use tax revenue. The agency continues to not receive the full

allocation of the watercraft sales and use tax revenue. The agency's maximum employment level was increased by 20 additional positions.

Virgil Kopf presented an overview of the Department's efforts to fully implement an automated point of sale system for the delivery of its licenses. The Department's Wal-Mart agents have an internet based system and that model will be extended to other agents. New rules and procedures will be necessary when the license delivery system is fully automated. Proposed rules presented included: (1) agents will all be businesses or governmental entities, (2) any new agent as of July 1, 2005 will be automated, (3) all agents will be automated by July 2006, (4) all funds currently on deposit from agents will be refunded, and (5) agents will be required to provide the needed hardware and internet service connection. License agents will retain the \$0.50 issuance fee and the Department will pay a \$0.25 transaction fee to VIPNet. Overall, it is estimated that the Department will realize an approximate savings in operations costs of \$30,000 annually.

Adjournment: Ms. Crumley announced that the next scheduled meeting of the Board is June 23, 2005. She called for any additional business and as there was none, the meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Belle Harding
Secretary to the Director